47 ⁊ min gast geblissude on Gode minum Hælende.

48 Forþam þe he geseah his þinene ead-modnesse. soðlice heonun-forð me eadige secgað ealle cneoressa.

49 Forþam þe me mycele þing dyde se ðe mihtig is. ⁊ his nama is halig.

50 ⁊ his mild-heortnes of cneoresse on cneoresse hine ondrædendum:

51 He worhte mægne on his earme. he to-dælde þa ofer-modan on mode hyra heortan.

52 He awearp þa rican of setle. and þa eað-modan upahof.

53 Hingrigende he mid godum gefylde. ⁊ ofer-mode idele forlet.

54 He afeng Israhel his cniht. ⁊ gemunde his mild-heortnesse.

55 Swa he spræc to urum fæderum. Abrahame and his sæde on á weorulde.

56 Soðlice Maria wunude mid hyre swylce þry monðas. ⁊ gewende þa to hyre huse.

57 Ða wæs gefylled Elizabethe cenning-tid. and heo sunu cende.

58 ⁊ hyre nehchebures ⁊ hyre cuðan ꝥ gehyrdon. ꝥ Drihten his mild-heortnesse mid hyre mærsude ⁊ hig mid hyre blissodon.

59 Ða on þam ehteoðan dæge hig comon ꝥ cild ymbsniðan. and nemdon hine his fæder naman Zachariam:

60 Ða andswarode his modor. Ne se soðes. ac he bið Iohannes genemned:

61 Ða cwædon hi to hyre. Nis nan on þinre mægðe þyssum naman genemned:

62 Ða bicnodon hi to his fæder. hwæt he wolde hyne genemnedne beon:

63 Þa wrat he gebedenum wex-brede. Iohannes is his nama. ða wundrodon hig ealle:

64 Ða wearð sona his muð ⁊ his tunge ge-openod. ⁊ he spræc. Drihten bletsigende:

65 Ða wearð ege geworden ofer ealle hyra nehchebures. and ofer ealle Iudea munt-land wæron þas word gewidmærsode.

66 ⁊ ealle þa ðe hit gehyrdon. on hyra heortan settun ⁊ cwædon. Wenst ðu hwæt byð þes cnapa. witodlice Drihtnes hand wæs mid him:

67 And Zacharias his fæder wæs mid halegum Gaste gefylled. ⁊ he witegode and cwæð.

68 Gebletsud sy Drihten Israhela God. forþam þe he geneosude. ⁊ his folces alysednesse dyde.

69 And he us hæle horn arærde on Dauides huse his cnihtes.

70 Swa he spræc þurh his halegra witegena muð. þa ðe of worldes frym ðe spræcon.

71 ⁊ he alysde us of urum feondum. and of ealra þara handa þe us hatedon.

72 Mild-heortnesse to wyrcenne mid urum fæderum. ⁊ gemunan his halegan cyðnesse.

73 Þyne uy to syllenne þone að þe he urum fæder Abrahame swor.

74 Ðæt we butan ege. of ure feonda handa alysede. him þeowian

75 On halignesse beforan him eallum urum dagum:

76 And þu cnapa bist þæs hehstan witega genemned. þu gæst beforan Drihtnes ansyne. his wegas gearwian.

77 To syllene his folce hæle gewit on hyra synna forgyfnesse.

78 Ðurh innoðas ures Godes mild-heortnesse. on þam he us geneosude of eastdæle up-springende.

79 Onlyhtan þam þe on þystrum ⁊ on deaðes sceade sittað. ure fet to gereccenne on sibbe weg:

80 Soðlice se cnapa weox. ⁊ wæs on gaste gestrangod. ⁊ wæs on westenum oð þone dæg hys ætywednessum on Israhel:

43 And my ſpiryt hath gladid in God myn helthe.

44 For he hath behulden the mekeneſſe of his handmayden: for lo for this alle generatiouns ſchulen ſeye that I am bleſſid.

45 For he that is mighti hath don to me grete thingis, and his name is holy.

46 And his merſy is fro kyndrede into kyndredis to men that dreden him.

47 He made myght in his arm, he ſcateride proude men with the thoughte of his herte.

48 He ſette doun myghty men fro ſeete and enhaunſide meke men.

49 He hath fulfillid hungry men with goodis, and he has left riche men voide.

50 He havynge mynde of his mercy took up Iſrael his child,

51 As he hath ſpokun to oure fadris, to Abraham, and to his ſeed into worldis.

52 And Marye dwellide with hir as it were thre monethis and turned agen into his hous.

53 But the tyme of beringe child was fulfillid to Elizabeth, and ſche bar a ſon.

54 And the neyghbouris and coſyns of hir herden that the Lord hadde magnyfied his mercy with hir, and thei thankiden him.

55 And it was doon in the eightithe day thei camen to circumſide the child, and thei clepiden him Zacarye by the name of his fadir.

56 And his modir anſweride and ſeide, nay; but he ſchal be clepid Jon.

57 And thei ſeiden to hir, for no man is in thi kynrede that is clepid this name.

58 And thei bikenyden to his fadir, what he wolde that he were clepid.

59 And he axinge a poyntel wroot ſeiynge, Jon is his name, and alle men wondriden.

60 And annoon his mouth was openyd and his tunge, and he ſpak and bleſſide God.

61 And drede was maad on all hir neighbouris, and all the wordis weren pupliſchid on alle the mounteynes of Judee.

62 And alle men that herden puttiden in her herte, and ſeiden what manner child ſcal this be, for the hond of the Lord was with him.

63 And Zacarye his fadir was fulfillid with the holy Goſt, and profeciede and ſeide.

64 Bleſſid be the Lord God of Iſrael, for he has viſitid and maad redempcioun of his puple.

65 And he has rered to us an horn of helthe in the hous of Dauith his child.

66 As he ſpak by the mouth of hiſe holy prophetis that weren fro the world.

67 Helth fro oure enemyes, and fro the hond of alle men that hatiden us.

68 To do merſy with oure fadris, and to have mynde of his holy teſtament.

69 The grete ooth that he ſwoor to Abraham our fadir,

70 To geve himſelf to us, that we without drede delyvered fro the hond of oure enemyes ſerve him,

71 In holyneſſe and rightwiſneſſe before him, in alle our dayes.

72 And thou child ſchalt be clepid the profete of the higheſte, for thou ſchalt go before the face of the Lord to make redy hiſe weyes.

73 To geve ſcience of heelth to his puple into remiſſioun of her ſynnes.

74 By the inwardeneſs of the merſy of oure God, in the which he ſpringyng up fro on high hath viſited us.

75 To geve light to them that ſitten in derkneſſis, and in ſchadowe of deeth, to dreſſe oure feet into the weye of pees;

76 And the child wexide, and was confortid in ſpiryt, and was in deſert placis till to the day of his ſchewing to Yſrael.

Of the *Saxon* poetry ſome ſpecimen is neceſſary, though our ignorance of the laws of their metre and the quantities of their ſyllables, which it would be very difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to recover, excludes us from that pleaſure which the old bards undoubtedly gave to their contemporaries.

The firſt poetry of the *Saxons* was without rhyme, and conſequently muſt have depended upon the quantity of their ſyllables; but they began in time to imitate their neighbours, and cloſe their verſes with correſpondent ſounds.

The two paſſages, which I have ſelected, contain apparently the rudiments of our preſent lyrick meaſures, and the writers may be juſtly conſidered as the genuine anceſtors of the *Engliſh* poets.

He mai him sore adreden,
Ðæt he ðanne ore bidde ne mugen,
Uor ꝥ bilimpeð ilome.
He is wis ꝥ bit and bote
And bet biuoren dome.
Deað com on ðis midelard
Ðurh ðæs deofles onde,
And senne and sorge and iswinc,
On se and on londe.

Ic am elder ðanne ic wes,
A wintre ⁊ ec a lore.
Ic ealdi more ðanne ic dede,
Mi wit oghte to bi more.
Se ꝥ hine selue uorget,
Uor wiue oðer uor childe.
He sal comen on euele stede,
Bute god him bi milde.
Ne hopie wif to hire were,
Ne were to his wiue.
Bi for him selue eurich man,
Ðær wile he bieð aliue.
Eurich man mid ꝥ he haueð,
Mai beggen heuenriche.
Se ðe lesse ⁊ se ðe more,
Here aider iliche.
Heuene and erðe he ouersieð,
His eghen bið fulbriht.
Sunne ⁊ mone ⁊ alle sterren,
Bieð ðiestre on his lihte.
He wot hwet ðencheð and hwet doþ,
Alle quike wihte.
Nis no louerd swich is xist,
Ne no king swich is drihte.
Heuene ⁊ erðe ⁊ all ðat is,
Biloken is on his honde.
He deð al ꝥ his wille is,
On sea and ec on londe.
He is ord albuten orde,
And ende albuten ende.
He one is eure on eche stede,
Wende wer ðu wende.
He is buuen us and bineðen,
Biuoren and ec bihind.
Se man ꝥ godes wille deð,
Hie mai hine aihwar uinde.
Eche rune he iherð,
And wot eche dede.
He ðurh-sigð eches iðanc,
Wai hwat sel us to rede.
Se man neure nele don god,
Ne neure god lif leden.
Er deð ⁊ dom come to his dure,
He mai him sore adreden.
Hunger ⁊ ðurst hete ⁊ chele,
Ecðe and all unhelðe.
Ðurh deð com on ðis midelard,
And oðer unselðe.
Ne mai non herte hit iþenche,
Ne no tunge telle.
Hu muchele winum and hu uele,
Bieð inne helle.
Louie God mid ure hierte.
And mid all ure mihte.
And ure emcristene swo us self,
Swo us lereð drihte.
Sume ðer habbeð lesse mergðe,
And sume ðer habbeð more.
Ech efter ðan ꝥ he dede,
Efter ꝥ he swanc sore.
Ne sel ðer bi bried ne win,
Ne oðer kennes este.
God one sel bi eches lif,
And blisce and eche reste.
Ne sal ðar bi scete ne srud,
Ne worldes wele none.
Ac si mergþe ꝥ men us bihat,
All sall ben god one.
Ne mai no mergþe bi swo muchel,
Swo is godes isihðe.
Hi is soþ sune and briht,
And dai bute nihte.
Ðer is wele bute wane,
And reste buten iswinche.
Se ꝥ mai and nele ðeder come,
Sore hit sel uorðenche.
Ðer is blisce buten twege,
And lif buten deaðe.
Ðer eure sullen wunie ðer,
Bliðe hi bieþ and eaðe.
Ðer is geugeþe buten elde,
And elde buten unhelþe.
Nis ðer sorge ne sor non,
Ne non unselðe.
Ðer me sel drihten isen,
Swo are he is mid iwisse.
He one mai and sel al bien,
Engles and manner blisce.
To ðare blisce us bring god,
Ðet rixeð buten ende.
Ðanne he ure saula unbint,
Of lichamlice bend.
Crist geue us lede swich lif,
And habbe swichne ende.
Ðet we moten ðider cumen,
Ðanne we hennes wende.

About the year 1150, the *Saxon* began to take a form in which the beginning of the preſent *Engliſh* may be plainly diſcovered; this change ſeems not to have been the effect of the *Norman* conqueſt, for very few *French* words are found to have been introduced in the firſt hundred years after it; the language muſt therefore have been altered by cauſes like thoſe which, notwithſtanding the care of writers and ſocieties inſtituted to obviate them, are even now daily making innovations in every living language. I have exhibited a ſpecimen of the language of this age from the year 1135 to 1140 of the *Saxon* chronicle, of which the latter part was apparently written near the time to which it relates.

Ðis gære for þe king Stephne ofer sæ to Normandi. ⁊ þer wes under-fangen. forði ꝥ hi wenden ꝥ he sculde ben alsuic alse þe eom wes. ⁊ for he hadde get his tresor. ac he to-deld it ⁊ scatered sotlice. Micel hadde Henri king gadered gold ⁊ syluer. and na god ne dide me for his saule þar of. Ða þe king Stephne to Engla-land com þa macod he his gadering æt Oxene-ford. ⁊ þar he nam þe biscop Roger of Seres beri. ⁊ Alexander biscop of Lincoln. ⁊ te Canceler Roger hise neues. ⁊ dide ælle in prisun. til hi iafen up here castles. Ða þe suikes undergæton ꝥ he milde man was ⁊ softe ⁊ god. ⁊ na iustise ne dide. þa diden hi alle wunder. Hi hadden him manred maked and aðes suoren. ac hi nan treuðe ne heolden. alle he wæron for-sworen. ⁊ here treoðes for-loren. for æuric rice man his castles makede and agænes him heolden. and fylden þe land full of castles. Hi suencten suiðe þe wrecce men of þe land mid castel-weorces. þa þe castles waren maked. þa fylden hi mid deoules and yuele men. Ða namen hi þa men þe hi wenden ꝥ ani god hefden. baðe be nihtes and be dæies. carl-men ⁊ wimmen. and diden heom in prisun efter gold and syluer. ⁊ wined heom un-tellendlice wining. for ne wæren næure nan martyrs swa wined alse hi wæron. Me henged up bi þe fet and smoked heom mid ful smoke. me henged bi þe þumbes.

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